Building country capacity for adoption and implementation of standards and voluntary performance targets for clean cookstoves and clean cooking solutions

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Concept Note

Background: Household air pollution resulting from the use of polluting and inefficient energy in the home for cooking is the leading environmental risk factor for ill health globally. Chronic exposure to household air pollution puts household members at greater risk for diseases like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, cataract, and childhood pneumonia. New WHO estimates reveal that over three billion people relied on polluting energy sources for cooking in 2016, leading to almost 4 million deaths each year, and contributing significantly to ambient air pollution. An estimated 12% of ambient air pollution is caused by household air pollution globally. Inefficient household cooking practices also contribute to climate change due to emissions of greenhouse gases and short-lived climate pollutants. Up to 25% of black carbon emissions come from residential solid fuel use (including cooking, lighting and heating). Each household can produce up to 3 tons of CO_2 equivalent greenhouse gases per year from inefficient cooking. Finally, the burden of inefficient cooking and related fuel collection falls disproportionately on women and children.

In light of the substantial health risk presented by household energy use, and the current momentum to ensure access to clean energy presented by the Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global initiatives, WHO released the first ever normative guidance for household energy use, the **WHO Guidelines for indoor air quality: household fuel combustion**[1]. The Guidelines are intended to inform and support decision makers in the health and other sectors to bring about the transition to modern healthy household energy as quickly and equitably as feasible. In particular, they aim to enable policy-makers working on the energy planning process to ensure that efforts to increase access to clean and safe household energy deliver genuine and substantial health gains. This increased access can also have significant co-benefits; clean cooking is integral to 10 Sustainable Development Goals, including those focused on health, climate action, and gender equality.

Complementing this effort, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has recently finalized **laboratory testing protocols** for cookstove and clean cooking technologies[2], which provide laboratory measurement and evaluation methods for emissions, energy efficiency, safety

[1] WHO 2014. Guidelines for indoor air quality: household fuel combustion. Accessed from: http://www.who.int/airpollution/guidelines/household-fuel-combustion/en/

[2] International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 2018. ISO 19867-1:2018 Clean cookstoves and clean cooking solutions -- Harmonized laboratory test protocols -- Part 1: Standard test sequence for emissions and performance, safety and durability. Accessed from: https://www.iso.org/standard/66519.html?browse=tc

and durability of cookstoves. Forthcoming from ISO are a complementary set of **voluntary performance targets** (VPTs) that include five tiers of performance for emissions, efficiency, safety and durability, based on laboratory testing results. The VPTs can be considered as an approach to benchmarking potential performance of cookstoves and clean cooking solutions. By applying these laboratory standards, VPTs, as well as the WHO Guidelines, countries can make efforts to ensure that cooking technologies marketed as "clean" truly achieve required emission levels to protect health. These standards and benchmarks can also support countries' climate and environmental goals, as well as provide consumer protection. In addition, standards can drive the market to higher quality products, and serve as a mechanism for manufacturers to distinguish their products from those of their competitors.

WHO and the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstove plan to host an expert stakeholder consultation in Kathmandu, Nepal, to disseminate the evidence and recommendations in these new ISO standards, voluntary performance targets, and the WHO Guidelines, and provide technical assistance to countries for the adoption of national standards for clean cookstoves. It is proposed to host two simultaneous consultations targeting different audiences with a sub-set of overlapping sessions that will be attended by all participants:

1. ***Expert stakeholder consultation on standards adoption, 11-13 December*:**
   Anticipated participants include key stakeholders from Ministries of Energy, Health, Environment, and national standards bodies.

   Consultation Objectives:
   1) Inform key stakeholders about the recently developed ISO standards for testing clean cookstoves and clean cooking solutions, as well as the Voluntary Performance Targets and the process for determining tiers of performance
   2) Provide information on the significant impacts of household energy use on health, climate, environment, as well as women and girls
   3) Describe how voluntary performance targets were developed based on the recommendations of the WHO Guidelines, and describe the recommendations and underlying evidence reviews
   4) Encourage the use and adoption (including country adaptation) of the new laboratory standard as a national standard
   5) Visit cookstove testing laboratory and observe the cookstove testing process
   6) Participate in interactive working sessions focused on taking steps towards developing action plans for the adoption of national cookstove standards and implementation planning

2. ***Expert stakeholder consultation on laboratory testing methods contained in the new ISO standard, 10-14 December:***
   Anticipated participants include staff from cookstove testing centers and other stakeholders of clean cookstoves and clean cooking solutions.

   Consultation Objectives:
   1) Inform key stakeholders about the recently developed ISO standards for testing clean cookstoves and clean cooking solutions, as well as the Voluntary Performance Targets and process for determining tiers of performance
   2) Provide information on the important impacts of household energy use on health, climate, environment, as well as women and girls

3) Encourage the use and adoption (including country adaptation) of the new laboratory standard as a national standard
4) Provide hands-on practical training on conducting the cookstove tests with the new standard, including analysis of results

Invited participants will include:

- experts (including representatives from national standards bodies, and ministries of health, energy, agriculture, etc. as appropriate) from countries including: Nepal, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar and Timor-Leste
- development partners (e.g. UN, bilateral agencies, NGOs, and other) working on health and household energy issues
- manufacturers of cookstoves and clean cooking solutions
- representatives of universities, research institutions, and cookstove testing centers